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## NEW BOOKS REVIEWED

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DEMOCRACY IN NEW ZEALAND. By ANDRÉ SIEGFRIED. Translated from the French by E. V. BURNS. London: G. Bell & Sons, Limited, 1914.

As a study in politics, M. Siegfried's book, now for the first time translated into English, is of general interest; for New Zealand not only occupies a peculiar position in the British Empire, but it has been the scene of extraordinary legislative experiments. The eyes of the whole world have been directed toward this isolated colony—a fact of which the natives have been duly conscious, and which has played its part in shaping their course. Those desirous of examining the actual workings of novel laws and institutions, from old-age pensions to women's suffrage, naturally turn to New Zealand. It is made clear, however, throughout M. Siegfried's luminous discussion, that the superficial observer is extremely liable to be misled both as to the spirit of New Zealand legislation and as to the conclusions to be drawn from its results. New-Zealanders, it is repeatedly pointed out, are in no sense theoretical socialists: they are opportunists, with a positive aversion to policies based on general principles or looking to the remote future. Moreover, special conditions—among which may be reckoned exceptional prosperity, a favored position in the empire, and an unusual gift on the part of the people themselves for moderation and for compromise, often of an inconsistent sort—have rendered feasible in New Zealand a policy which could hardly be made to work as a whole anywhere else on the globe. The word "democracy" in M. Siegfried's title is therefore chosen advisedly: socialism as such has very little to do with the case.

It is characteristic of the colony, however, that the ends of radical democracy have been achieved without changing a form of government which is not in itself especially democratic. The governor, who is a representative of the Crown, exercises little influence on local affairs, serving rather as a link between the colony and the mother-country than as an active executive. But the former function he does satisfactorily fulfil. The people, indeed, attach much importance to the office and are sufficiently imbued with a snobbish spirit to be dissatisfied if other than a "highly decorative nobleman" is sent to them. The upper legislative chamber, we are told, not being elective, has fallen into a state of desuetude. In a country without an aristocracy, respect for the old forms is still oddly manifested, but the government in effect is a government of one chamber.

The period with which M. Siegfried chiefly deals is that of the supremacy of the Liberal-Labor party under the leadership of R. J. Seddon. After the failure of the great strike in 1890, the laboring-men sought to gain

their ends through the ballot, and in this they were aided by the small landholders, whose interests were to a certain extent identical with theirs. There was little to check the operations of the Liberal-Labor party which grew out of this coalition. In New Zealand, in fact, the so-called Conservative party hardly deserved the name, being scarcely more averse to State intervention than the Radicals themselves. What is the fundamental explanation of this almost universal state of mind? M. Siegfried replies that, in the first place, "the structure of society is simple, and there is no place for the inextricable tangle of interests, traditions, and prejudices which so complicates the solution of European political problems. The colonials, moreover, are generally men of mingled strength and simplicity. Their strength makes them unconscious of obstacles, and they attack the most delicate questions much as one opens a path through a virgin forest with an ax." Full play is allowed to these forthright tendencies by the comparative freedom of the colonists from outside complications. "The Australasians are like spoiled children. England has solved for them all the most difficult questions of foreign, military, and financial policy. They still have only to concern themselves with their internal affairs, unless they choose to do otherwise, and before anything fatal can happen to them, there are still many mistakes which they can safely make."

The legislation indulged in by the Seddon Government during its long period of power makes an interesting exhibit. It includes a great variety of special laws for the protection of employees, a law providing for the compulsory conciliation and arbitration of disputes between labor and capital, old-age pensions, land legislation intended to bring about the division of large estates, an act authorizing the State to advance money directly to settlers, restriction of immigration, and the granting of the suffrage to women. When we inquire how all these measures have worked, we receive the reply that under the circumstances prevailing in New Zealand they have worked pretty well. We are not permitted, however, to forget that the circumstances are peculiar. Repeatedly, emphasis is laid upon the political and financial support which New Zealand receives from England. Further, it is pointed out that social legislation is an expensive luxury, entailing a protective tariff which bears somewhat heavily upon the consumer, while the protected manufacturer has to pay high for labor. Were the tariff barrier to be removed, "the Draconian laws of international competition would but too soon remind manufacturers and politicians that at whatever sacrifice goods must be produced cheaply." Meanwhile, New-Zealanders hold that a "high tariff is not too high a price for a nation to pay to insure the comfort and prosperity of its workers." Lastly, we are made to see that in New Zealand—a country in which "even the revolutionary spirit is permeated with compromise"—radical tendencies such as elsewhere would give good ground for alarm are kept surprisingly within bounds. A serious doubt, however, is suggested. It is not in the nature of things political that steps taken in a radical direction should be easily retraced, yet under certain conditions the repeal of some of the legislation now in force in New Zealand might become an economic necessity. Already in the ten years since *Democracy in New Zealand* was written, a certain reaction has been felt, though bad times have not arrived.

Seldom in the treatment of any subject are scientific accuracy and logic so nicely blended with literary skill as in this book of M. Siegfried's. The

author touches with appreciation upon nearly every phase of New Zealand life, expressing himself in clear and lively phrases not too carefully stripped of the harmless exaggeration of ordinary speech, and in arriving at conclusions regarding important matters he displays a statesman-like caution. His book is neither a collection of irresponsible impressions nor a dry summary of statistics, but a true interpretation.

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POLITICAL AND LITERARY ESSAYS. By THE EARL OF CROMER. Macmillan & Company, Limited. London: 1913.

The brief periodical essays collected in this volume afford little scope for that full and detailed exposition of political doctrine or administrative method for which we commonly read the writings of a statesman, and in dealing with literary matters the Earl of Cromer seems to shun rather than to seek a reputation for marked originality. But his succinct pronouncements upon political topics have weight as the concentrated results of much thought and experience, and however humbly he may describe himself as dabbling in literature at the close of an active political career, the qualities of mellow appreciation and sound judgment which pervade his literary comments are better than the more showy kinds of excellence. It is in those passages of his book which deal with the government of subject races that most philosophy is to be found. Here a thought often emphasized is the essential difference of mentality and the corresponding differences of interest that obtain between the Oriental and his Occidental brother. The Englishman, despite his "commendable asymmetry of mind" as compared with the Continental races, is liable to make serious mistakes in dealing with the native of Asia, who simply isn't logical, in the European sense, at all. Great caution, therefore, is evidently advisable in the introduction of English political institutions among Asiatics. "A freely elected Egyptian Parliament, supposing such a thing to be possible, would not improbably legislate for the protection of the slave-owner, if not the slave-dealer, and no assurance can be felt that the electors of Rajputana, if they had their own way, would not re-establish suttee." Loyalty based upon a similarity of ideals is, accordingly, not to be looked for, but a sort of makeshift loyalty springing from a recognition of the blessings conferred by peace and prosperity is always attainable. That reforms should be instituted slowly while the egotism of commerce is at the same time kept within due bounds seems obviously the right policy. Such, at least, is the view of a convinced but moderate imperialist, such as the Earl of Cromer professes himself to be. Written for the most part for the purpose of guiding public opinion with respect to English political questions, many of these essays have in them rather little that is of direct concern to Americans, though the author's views of subject races may be thought to have some bearing on our policy toward the Philippines, and the fact that he is inclined to distrust the reality of republicanism in China is not without its significance for us. His literary essays are altogether enjoyable. In the one, entitled "Translation and Paraphrase," he gives a collection of citations, illustrating both methods, such as will delight the connoisseur in these matters. He speaks soundly and reassuringly of the future of the classics, and his discussion of popular, naval, and military songs is full of literary and human interest.